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WHAT IS THE CHURCH SOCIETY?

Parson.—I called this evening, Mr. Heyric, to ask you to attend our Church Society meeting, which is to be held next week ?

Parishioner.—I am very glad you have called, sir, for I wanted to ask you about this Church Society.

Par.—Did you not receive one of the annual reports of the Society's proceedings, which I circulated through the parish ?

Parish.—I have, sir, but there is a good deal about it I don't rightly understand.

Par.—The readiest way of explaining its objects is to refer you to the Constitution, contained in the beginning of the

Report ; and as I have one in my pocket, we will go through it together. First, then, you see it is a Missionary Society, established for the support of Clergymen of the Church within this Diocese, who shall labour for the spiritual good of the people—for assisting poor Ministers by increasing their stipends—for providing some support for them when worn out by age, exertion and infirmities, and unfit for work, as well as for their widows and orphans after they themselves are removed by death. This is the first class of objects the Church Society has in view, and I am sure no one can deny their excellence.

Parish.—No, sir, that they can't, for the Clergy in this country are too poor to lay up either for themselves or their families, and I don't know that the people would care to see them *layin' up*, even if they had the means.

Par.—Next you see the Church Society, as the Constitution shows, is a Society for promoting *education*, according to the principles of the Church.

Parish.—That's good, that's good. I wish we had a day school here.

Par.—The next object to which the Church Society desires to direct its efforts is, to grant assistance to deserving young men, who, have not the means of pursuing those studies which are needful to fit them for the ministry, for there are numberless instances where respectable and excellent young men are lost to the ministry, for no other reason than their poverty.

Parish —But is not this part of the Society's work done for them already?

Par.—The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel has indeed given both scholarships and exhibitions to the College at Lennoxville, where our Missionaries are educated, but it is to be feared that the time is nearer than we think, when these and other grants they make shall be withdrawn.

Parish.—I see in the report something about Books and Tracts being "circulated through the medium of the Depository;" now I don't understand what this "Depository" is.

Par.—It is a book-store in Couillard Street, Quebec, which has been set up by the Church Society, for the purpose of furnishing, at the lowest possible prices, Bibles, Testaments, Prayer Books, and other books and tracts setting forth the doctrines of the Gospel. You can get a good Bible there for 1s. 3d., a Testament for 6d., a Prayer Book for 10d., and other books remarkably cheap. Besides this Depository for the sale of books, there is another, established for the same purpose, at Lennoxville, and there ought to be branch depositories in every Mission of the Province.

Parish.—Why, what a pity it is that these depositories are not more known amongst the people.

Par.—The last object which the Church Society has in view is, to assist in the building, keeping up, and endowing of churches and parsonages, and the setting apart of church-yards and burial-grounds.

Parish.—All very good, I am sure. But where does the Society get the

money to do all this; it must take a large sum?

Par.—It would indeed take a large sum to carry out fully all the objects which the Society has in view; and we cannot hope to do it for years to come, it is still, comparatively speaking, with it the day of small things. The only source to which it can look for the funds necessary to carry out its holy object is, *the free-will offerings of the members of the Church*; and to obtain and gather these together, and devote them to the objects I have named, is the purpose for which the Church Society was formed.

Parish.—But why should a Society of this kind for the support of the Clergy be formed at all? The Government pays the greatest part of all your stipend, does it not, sir?

Par.—Most certainly *not*. The Government affords no more countenance to the Church in this Colony, than does to any of the religious denominations; it is true that George III, endowed the Church munificently from

the waste lands of the Crown—of the Crown, observe, not of the people,—but far the greater part of these lands, now called Clergy Reserves, have since been taken away by the Governments of more recent days.* A portion of this land was sold, and from a part of the proceeds arising from these sales, *some* of our Clergy are to some extent supported.

Parish.—Well! I am surprised at what you say. I know that you, sir, are not supported by your congregation, further than by the small sum arising from the pew-rents; and I always fancied

* For a considerable period, the Imperial Parliament made an annual grant of £16,000 to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, to assist them in the support of their Missionaries in British North America, but about 18 years ago, it was resolved by these gradually to withdraw that grant, and the Society was consequently obliged to provide for the Missionaries since appointed from its own resources.

Three Clergymen only now remain, at whose death or removal, all support from the Imperial Government to the Church in this Colony will cease.

that you drew the rest of your stipend from Government.

Par.—Not at all. I, and the great bulk of the Clergy in the Diocese, are supported by the bounty of one of the great Missionary Societies of the Church of England—the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which (with the other great Society in England, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge,) has cherished the Church in these Colonies from the very beginning.

Parish.—It's a great pity all this is not better known among the country folks. But surely these Societies, if they knew how badly the people in the back settlements were off, would not refuse to help them.

Par.—They are well aware of the spiritual destitution which exists, for our Bishop is in continual communication with them; but though they are very willing (as their deeds show) to supply our wants as far as they are able, yet there are many reasons which prevent

them from assisting us to a greater extent than they already do.

Parish.—What are those reasons?

Par.—The first is, that a large share of their funds comes from the *free-will offerings of people who are really much poorer than ourselves*. I have heard it stated that one of the Missionary Societies in England receive £15,000 a-year, from the *penny-a-week subscriptions of the labouring poor*. Now, there is no comparison between the wealth of an English labourer and that of the bulk of the people of this Colony. *We are far more able to help ourselves than they are to help us*: and I suppose you will admit it to be unreasonable that the poor should help those who are comparatively rich.

Parish.—There is no disputing that, sir, it's true; but then if we *are* better able to help some of the people at home than they are to help us, still, there are thousands of rich people there who could do a deal for us without feeling it.

Par.—Very true: but then how do we know that *they will*; are they even

I certain that they *ought* if they see that though we *could* do a great deal for ourselves, we put our hands behind us and wait for them to do every thing, do you think *that* a likely way to secure their sympathy or assistance?

Parish.—Why, no.—We don't deserve that they should lend us a helping hand, if we don't help ourselves.

Par.—Exactly; and it is in order to enable us to put our shoulder to do this with effect that the Church Society was formed.—However, besides those which I have mentioned, there is another still more sufficient reason for their not rendering us more assistance than they do already, and that is,—that, though willing to do so, they are not able. It is not very long since there were only six Bishops in all the Colonies of Great Britain, and *now*, there are twenty-three, and in the course of another year or so there will probably be upwards of twenty-five, which is cause for much thankfulness of heart, for the only *way human* to provide for the increase of the Church, and

the dissemination of "the Word which makes wise unto Salvation," is to plant our Bishops in every country where there are "ears to hear." Now, for the support of the Church and Clergy in these Dioceses, the Societies in England are to a greater or less extent looked to, and if their income was double what it is, they could not answer so many demands made upon them from every quarter of the globe. They therefore expect that we should be up and stirring on our behalf; for we should be preparing ourselves for that day, which cannot be far distant, when *they will withdraw, at all events from the older settlements, that assistance which they at present render.* You see, therefore, that neither from the Government nor from the Missionary Societies of the Church in England, can we look for much further aid in supplying the spiritual wants of this Diocese.

Parish.—That's plain. But then, there are the Clergy Reserves you mentioned a little while since; you said that a part of them were left us, can we get *nothing* from that quarter?

Par.—It is useless to build our hopes upon the Clergy Reserves. A large portion of the most valuable of them have been sold, as you know, and the share of the funds arising from the sale which has been given to the Church, is far too small to meet even her present wants, and the mode in which much of it is being disposed of, is such as to leave little hope of its proving of much service towards the extension of the Church.

Parish.—It does seem a hard case : a strange way for the Church to be treated by the State.

Par.—It does indeed : however, we have nothing to do but to submit. They know that with us it is a religious principle, continually inculcated upon us by the Gospel. The proper way for Churchmen to do now, is to act, with reference to the support and extension of the Church, as if there was no such thing as a Clergy Reserve in existence. It must now be evident to you, that we must depend neither upon the Missionary Societies of the Church in England, nor

the Clergy Reserve Fund, to supply the spiritual destitution of this Diocese.

Parish.—It's plain, sir, that whatever is done for the Church now, *must* be done by the Church folks themselves: but it will be hard to convince a deal of the folks of the truth of this. They have been so used to have all the blessings of the Church provided for them at home without cost, that it won't be easy to persuade them that here, *if they want them*, they must *pay for them*.

Par.—Still we must endeavor to convince them of that truth; for never, till the people understand the true position in which the Church stands, will they give that general and hearty support to the Church Society which is necessary to its success. And this I am sure of, that if intelligent Laymen would make themselves acquainted with these things, and with the nature and objects of the Church Society, they could most materially assist the Clergy in overcoming the ignorance and prejudices of the people on these subjects.

Parish.—Very true, sir: and that reminds me that I must ask a few more questions about it, for I should like to understand the management or working of it. Who are to become members of the Society?

Par.—EVERY PERSON belonging to our communion. The Society is so formed as to be capable of embracing every member of the Church, whether they are young or old, rich or poor, male or female, and we must never rest satisfied till the members of the Church and the members of the Society are alike in number.

Parish.—But how is this to be managed?

Par.—This may be managed without much difficulty in those Parishes or Townships where there is a Clergyman residing or statedly visiting; for, by the Constitution of the Society, every Parson, with his Churchwardens and such of the parishioners as may be appointed, form what is called "a Parochial Association or Committee of the Church Society." The

duty of this Committee is to call upon every member of the Church within the the parish, and invite them to join the Society—and any sum which they may give, however small, makes them members of the “Parochial Association.”

Parish.—That seems a very good plan. But after the money has been gathered together in this way, how is it disposed of?

Par.—The Parson of the parish, or the parochial Treasurer, if one be appointed, receives it, and sends it direct to the Treasurer of the Parent Society in Quebec.

Parish.—And who is it, sir, that conducts the business of the Society, and determines the way in which these funds shall be expended?

Par.—The Bishop of Quebec is President of the Society. Everything is considered and discussed at the meetings of a Central Board, held quarterly. When any very important measure is to be considered, a month's notice, or sometimes two months' notice is given of it;

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so that persons in all parts of the Diocese may be aware of what is going forward, and may have an opportunity of attending and stating their views.

Parish.—I see, that there is a Finance Committee?

Par.—The Finance Committee do not manage the business of the Society; their duty is simply to prepare matters for its consideration; and the practice of the Society is to refer all applications for grants of money to this Committee, for it to report upon to the central Board.

Parish.—I am sure we could not trust what we have to give, to better hands, though I am afraid that many of our people will say they must take care of themselves first.

Far.—Yes they often do say so, but none should encourage that sort of spirit, it is selfish. Our Lord would have us unselfish, "seeking not our own but others wealth," as St. Paul says, besides, the Society is most jealously careful that all its doings, and particularly all its money matters, should be open to the world. It is

one of its laws that in every Church in the Diocese there shall be collections made every year, which go towards the support of travelling Missionaries—towards the fund for sustaining the Widows and Orphans of the Clergy, and to such other objects embodied within its Constitution, as the Society may from time to time direct.

Parish.—All I can say is, that in my poor judgment there never was framed a wiser or more admirable institution of its kind; and you may count on me, sir, and all my family, doing everything in our power to forward it. You said, I think, just now, that the Society has been in existence for years: what support has it met with, and what has it effected during that time?

Par.—The degree of success which has attended its efforts is of an encouraging nature. Donations in land have been made by private individuals. It now also provides funds for the support of two Missionaries, and in one case at St. Francis the District Association has

pledged itself to give £50 towards its travelling Missionary.

Parish.—Indeed, sir, that is a good example.

Par.—The Society has also sent abroad, through the length and breadth of the Diocese, Bibles, New Testaments, Prayer Books, and many books and tracts, all containing useful information and sound religious instruction.

Parish.—Instead of calling it the day of small things, we might almost call it the day of great things, the Society must be doing great good, and every one ought to feel it a privilege to help on the good work, by joining it immediately.

Par.—Yes, Mr. Heyric, that is what we require, we want EVERY one to join it. Earnestly ought every sincere Churchman to strive and pray for the extension and prosperity of the Church Society.

Parish.—Indeed we ought all do so, sir.

Par.—I was sure I would gain your support for it; as soon as you thoroughly understood its nature and objects, they

are such as must commend themselves to our hearts. By the bye, I see your man Roger there coming in from the plough with his team, I must go and talk to him about this matter. Good evening, Roger; you attended our Church Society Meeting, and must remember the explanation which was then given of it. You did not become a member of the Society then, but I must have your name now.

Roger.—Why, sir, I am but a labouring man.

Par.—St. Paul expected men in your situation to be charitable, for he says that if we have no other means of relieving the wants of others, we are to labour, “working with our hands the thing that is good, in order that we may *have* to give to him that needeth.” (Ephesians iv. 28.)

Roger.—All I could give, sir, would not be worth having.

Par.—I don’t know that, your wages are ten dollars a month, and if you had lived in the times of the Old Testament, you would, at the very least, have had to

give to God's service twelve dollars a-year. (Levit. xxvii. 30.)—We'll take three pounds a-year from you, Roger, for the Church Society.

Roger.—Why, sir, would you ruin me out-right; I would'nt mind giving a trifle, but twelve dollars a-year!!!

Par.—Well, Roger, if you won't give what you ought, we'll even take a trifle for so good a cause. If every member of the Church in this diocese were to give a penny a-week, we should have an income for the Church Society that would do a good deal toward supplying the present wants of all the settled parts of the country.

Roger.—Well, sir, I would'nt mind giving that much, a penny a-week would not break me.

Par.—True enough, but see this. You get ten dollars a-month, that is one hundred and fifty pence a-week, and so you will really give *one penny* out of the hundred and fifty which you make—you will honour *God* who gives you *all your blessings*, with the *one hundred and*

fiftieth part of your substance ; you're a liberal n-an, Roger, very.

Roger.—Well, sir, it don't seem a great deal and that's the truth on't, but it will come to summat in a year.

Par.—Yes—to *four shillings and two pence* out of the *six hundred shillings* you will gain in the course of the year, if God should spare you and give you strength for work; it's a great acknowledgment, is it not, for so great a mercy,—four shillings and two pence?

Roger.—Well, we won't say any more about it, sir, but I'll be a dollar this year, and perhaps we may do more next.

Par.—Many persons in your circumstances, Roger, would not have acted as well as you have done, and I put the matter in the way I did, not from any unkindness, but merely to try and show you what miserable niggardliness passes now-a-days under the name of liberality. It will, I dare say, be considered a miracle of generosity in the parish, for a labouring man at ten dollars a-month, to give a dollar a-year to the Church Society.

Parish.—There's a deal of truth in what you say, sir, but till men feel they are debtors to God, for every blessing which makes them happy and comfortable, and for the strength which, as the Bible says, enables them to get wealth, they never will give with an open hand.

Par.—Very true, and when, in addition to that, they become sensible of the unspeakable value of the spiritual mercies which God has conferred upon them, when they feel their own unworthiness and weakness, and remember that it was to deliver beings so lost and helpless from the just desert of their sins, that God's well-beloved and Co-eternal Son suffered and died, then they will be sensible that all they can possibly give to the furtherance of His cause, would be an offering too poor to present in acknowledgement of mercy so unspeakable. When we duly value God's "inestimable love in the Redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ," the thought that He will accept a portion of that worldly wealth which *He Himself be-*

stowed upon us, as a token of our gratitude, will lead us to offer it, not only with willingness, but with a feeling of thankfulness that He should condescend to point out a way in which we may do something to mark our sense of all that we owe to Him.

Parish.—Yes, sir, and besides that, when we are blessed with “the means of Grace,” and by a proper use of them may enjoy “the hope of Glory,”—surely we must have hard hearts *not* to do something to extend them to others, more especially when we remember that we are blessed with them through the bounty and benevolence of our fellow Churchmen in England.

Par.—It gratifies me much to find you taking such correct views of these subjects, but as it is now getting late, I must be wending my way homewards, and so, Mr. Heyric, I will wish you good evening.

Parish.—Good evening, sir, and many thanks for the information which you have given me.

INCORPORATED CHURCH SOCIETY

OF THE

DIOCESE OF QUEBEC.

—
"Blessed are they that sow beside all waters."
 —

This Society was incorporated in the month of June, 1843; the first grant from its funds was made in July of the same year; and between that period and July, 1850, the following sums were expended:—

- 1.—On Missionary labor, (including £150 voted in the year 1845-6 to the Clergyman at Grif-
 fintown, Montreal,) — — — — —

£ s. d.
 1612 0 7

N. B. The Society has aimed at keeping two Missionaries constantly employed, at an expense of £250 a-year.—When this has not been found practicable, their duties have been divided (as far as possible) among the Clergymen residing in the neighborhood of destitute settlements, who have been remunerated for their extra labors by the Society.—Two Missionaries are at present employed, extracts from whose journals will appear from time to time in the Canadian Ecclesiastical Gazette.

- 2.—On aid towards erection, repair, &c., of Churches, — — — — —
 43 Grants were made for this object by the Society.

789 18 0

- 3.—On Parsonages, Glebes and Endowments, (including £100 to the Nicolet Endowment Fund,) — — — — —

442 11 0

- 4.—On Schools, — — — — —

21 6 10

Carried over 2865 16 11

	£	s.	d.
Brought over - - - - -	2865	16	11

The Society had hoped to have made some arrangement with the School Society for the Colonies, whereby Schools might have been opened in some of the poorer settlements of the Diocese. This proposal, though at first favorably entertained by the Society at home, has fallen through, from the want of funds on the part of that body.

5.—On the formation of a Book
and Tract Depository in Mon-

treal, - - - - -	£222	15	7
Returns from sales in do., - - - - -	69	13	7

Expend by the Society, - - - - -	153	2	0
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6.—On assistance to Widows and Orphans of deceased Clergymen, - - - - -	193	15	0
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7.—On landed property, acquired by the So- ciety, - - - - -	97	7	4
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Total, - - - - -	£3310	1	3
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N. B. With the exception of £170, no portion of the above amount was spent in the cities of Quebec and Montreal.

From the brief statement, furnished above, may be seen what the Society *has* done. Judge for yourselves whether it has a claim on your Christian sympathy and support. If so, pray for us, and “open wide the hand” to help forward our “labour of love.”

Quebec, November, 1852.

